



Ecumen Administrator Steve Mork, left; Clayton Anderson representing the Anderson Family, who gifted a large portion of the site to the project, and right; Ecumen's Director of Campuses Operations John Korzen-dorfer, had the honors of turning the earth for the groundbreaking.

Photo submitted

Groundbreaking ceremony marks new generation of senior living choices in North Branch

North Branch community leaders and leaders from Ecumen broke ground May 15 for senior housing in North Branch. Construction will begin within the next week and the new assisted living community is anticipated to open in the summer of 2007.

"This is an important day in the history and future of our community," said North Branch mayor Gloria Karsky. "A strong, vital community is one where people can live their entire lives and live fully. This initiative will ensure that people will be able to call North Branch 'home' for their entire lives."

"This project would not have happened without vision and working together," said Mike Robinson, chairman of the Chisago County Board of Commissioners. "From the land donation of the Clayton Anderson family, to those wanting senior housing that allows people to live in North Branch, thank you to Ecumen's commitment to North Branch and Chisago County, and to the different people who came together to

shape this vision and move it forward."

The new senior living community, which will be named as construction moves closer to completion, is just west of Tanger Mall at Falcon Avenue and 383rd Street. The \$20.5 million community will include a town center with a coffee shop that feels like a village bakery, a general store, community room and chapel; 51 assisted living residences that will include a diverse mix of amenities, personal services, and health care options; two memory care residences that will each serve up to 10 people.

The community also will later include a care residence that will provide more privacy and amenities than what yesterday's nursing homes provided. Ecumen also will incorporate new technology that will allow for greater independence for the community's members.

This project will expand Ecumen's presence in Chisago County. Ecumen also owns and operates Parnly in Chisago City.

"At Ecumen, we are focused on

creating places that our customers are proud to call home and that provide the amenities and options that allow them to live fully on their terms," said Kathryn Roberts, CEO and president of Ecumen. "We are greatly looking forward to expanding housing options in North Branch and providing a great way for people to live in a community that they cherish."

Shoreview-based Ecumen (www.ecumen.org) provides a variety of housing choices and services along the continuum of life for people 50-years-of-age and older. The name Ecumen comes from the word ecumenical, which in turn is derived from the root Greek word for home: "Oikos." Ecumen seeks to create "home" for older adults wherever they choose to live.

Ecumen, which is affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), has more than 4,000 team members who provide housing options and services in approximately 100 communities in the upper Midwest.